

This is simply unacceptable. It is our duty as a prosperous nation to unite and ensure these children find safe, loving homes.

Six years ago, my wife and I decided to expand our family and open our home to two foster care children.

Like many adoptive families, we faced many challenges during this process. But these experiences have only made our family stronger.

The adoption process is often complicated and riddled with paperwork, meetings, and home studies—important factors when accessing the ability of a family to care for a new child—but they can also discourage qualified parents from embarking on the adoption process.

The foster care community has been working with Congress and state governments across the country to streamline the adoption process and focus on limited resources, such as requiring frequent home visits and experienced caseworkers.

As Members of Congress, it is our job to be the voice for foster children and make sure their dreams are recognized. We owe it to them to streamline the adoption process to ensure positive outcomes for these kids.

It is important that we continue to make this process more accessible to families so that these children can be welcomed into loving homes.

Despite the obstacles that we still need to overcome, this is a time to celebrate those families that have decided to make a difference in the life of a child.

I commend these families and hope that children across the nation will find a place to call home this Saturday as part of National Adoption Day.

HONORING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF VFW METZGER-CROOK POST 6504

### HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 15, 2006*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join in honoring the 60th anniversary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Metzger-Crook Post 6504 in Waterloo, Illinois.

In 1946, as many of our nation's veterans were returning from serving their country in World War II, a small group of veterans in Monroe County, Illinois began discussions about forming a local VFW post. With assistance from the Adjutant of the neighboring post in Belleville, and after the original group solicited additional veterans for membership, the Metzger-Crook Post was formed and received its charter on April 27, 1946. The name, Metzger-Crook, was selected in honor of the first two Monroe County residents to give their lives in World War II, Monroe Metzger and William Crook.

With 108 names on the original charter, John Mitchell was elected as the first president. Meetings in the early days were held in a variety of locations as the fledgling organization grew in size of membership and array of activities. The first fish fry and picnic was held on July 4, 1946 and was such an instant success that it developed into an annual event.

Post 6504 has provided support for countless individuals and organizations in Monroe

County throughout their sixty years of service. Scholarship recipients, Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, Operation Uplink and Adopt a Unit are just a few examples of the benefactors of Post 6504's support. The post also provides the use of assistance equipment such as canes, walkers and wheelchairs to anyone who asks.

The Metzger-Crook Post 6504 Auxiliary is also celebrating their 60th anniversary this year. In addition to their duties at the post, the Auxiliary has provided support for numerous organizations and individuals. Annual trips to visit nursing home residents, support of cancer research, local veterans hospitals and the children of veterans are just some of the ways that the Auxiliary has contributed to its community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the members of VFW Metzger-Crook Post 6504 both past and present on sixty years of serving veterans and the people of southwestern Illinois.

CONGRATULATING FOCUS: HOPE ON RECEIVING THE 2006 EXEMPLARY INTEREST CONTRIBUTION AWARD

### HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 15, 2006*

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Focus: HOPE and its wonderful team for being selected to receive the 2006 Exemplary Public Interest Contribution Award (EPIC). Focus: HOPE co-founder Eleanor Josaitis is one of my dear friends and one of the most admirable and inspiring women I know. She has put together an outstanding team of motivated, energetic individuals such as Keith Cooley, who recently became Chief Executive Officer.

The EPIC Award is one of the most prestigious honors recognized by the United States government through the Department of Labor, honoring public interest organizations that support equal employment opportunities and have worked with federal contractors to make these opportunities available for minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, and veterans.

For nearly four decades, Focus: HOPE has been a leading voice for eliminating discrimination and injustice, starting in Southeast Michigan. Following the deadly and violent 1967 Detroit riots, Father William Cunningham and Eleanor Josaitis founded Focus: HOPE, a metropolitan civil and human rights organization committed to "intelligent and practical action to overcome racism, poverty and injustice." The belief is that this goal can be accomplished if the playing field is level and the economic mainstream is accessible to everyone.

Focus: HOPE programs assist individuals from all walks of life in many different ways. Their food distribution program is one of the largest in the nation, serving 43,000 children, mothers and seniors every month. Focus: HOPE career development programs are targeted towards preparing participants for employment in high-demand fields such as engineering and information technology. Since its inception, Focus: HOPE has literally helped thousands of individuals—particularly women and minorities—to become financially independent.

Focus: HOPE is one of the most successful organizations of its kind in this country, and this award is well-deserved. I ask that all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Focus: HOPE on another momentous achievement and in sending the Focus: HOPE team our best wishes for another successful year.

### TRIBUTE TO DEAN LENABURG

### HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, November 15, 2006*

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to reflect upon the life of a strong and good man, Dean Lenaburg from Valley City, North Dakota.

Dean was my mentor and my friend. Without his role in my life, I would never have been a Member of Congress. Dean passed away earlier this year after a long battle with kidney and liver disease, but his memory will continue to guide and inspire his family and friends in the years ahead.

Dean was easy to look up to—he towered over most of us with a height of 6' 4" and the athletic build of someone who excelled in sports. He easily transitioned from the small town competition of Portland, North Dakota to stand-out on the University of North Dakota football team.

Dean's parents obviously instilled in him an intellectual curiosity and love of learning—that would be an important feature of his character throughout his life.

Dean quickly completed his university years earning his undergraduate and law degrees in just 5 years. He married Mary Trom from Lisbon, North Dakota, and upon graduation they began the adventure of Dean's service in the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Dean would have been the very picture of an FBI agent in those days—tall, strong, smart, and absolutely committed to advancing justice and public safety. Dean was never one to talk about himself, so most of his experiences as an FBI agent were never shared—even with those closest to him. I know, however, he served with honor and that the FBI has never had an agent more trustworthy than Dean Lenaburg.

After several years Dean, Mary and their four young daughters, Kristin, Kathryn, Andrea, and Susan, came back to North Dakota where Dean began his career as a practicing attorney—briefly in Oakes and later in Valley City where he was a fixture in the area's legal community for more than 30 years.

In the course of these years, Dean made many positive contributions to his community, his clients and friends. He profoundly influenced my own life during this time, as revealed in three examples.

In 1971, my father died unexpectedly at the age of 57. Dean handled the estate. To this day, I vividly remember the competent and sensitive representation he provided to our grief stricken family. His example of service furthered my own thinking with regards to pursuit of a law career.

In 1974, Dean supported my application for the Rotary Foundation Award. With his help, I won the scholarship and was able to pursue graduate studies in England.

Finally, Dean and his law partner R. Jon Fitzner allowed me to fulfill my first career